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E. E. AYER A RELIC LOVER.

His Collection of "Americana" Deemed Finest in the World.

Resigning President of the Field Columbian Museum Gives Bountifully of Time and Fortune to all Public Institutions With Which He is Connected—How He Became Interested in the Indian—Intense Admirer of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado.

Edward E. Ayer, who resigned on Saturday from the presidency of the Field Columbian Museum, has achieved a national reputation as a gatherer of "Americana." His vast collection, which cost him in the gathering not less than \$150,000, is deemed the finest in the world. Ever since the World's Fair Mr. Ayer is said by his friends to have devoted more time to the museum than to his personal business. Much of the success of the museum has been due to his work and liberality. To the Chicago Historical Society, the Newberry Library, and the Art Institute, he has given bountifully, of both his time and fortune. Seventeen per cent of his life's accumulations have been devoted to upbuilding the public institutions with which he has been connected. He has been a strong and persistent force for advancement and wider usefulness.

Mr. Ayer is the son of Judge Ayer, who lived in the early days at Harvard. Ill. In his boyhood he drove a team from Harvard to Kenosha with wheat from the farm. That was before the

railroad had reached Harvard. After a brief experience in commercial life he made the overland trip to California to search for gold. All he found he worked for in a sawmill at \$1.50 a day. Then the war came along, and he enlisted as a volunteer. His service was in keeping the Indians in check along the frontier. He became deeply interested in the red man, and when wealth came later he devoted a large part of it to perpetuating the religion, life, and traditions of the American Indians.

BEGINS BUSINESS CAREER.

After the war Mr. Ayer returned to Harvard and took a contract for supplying the Northwestern railroad with wood for its locomotives. This was the beginning of his business career. He extended his field to supplying cedar for telegraph poles, and at last moved to Chicago to enter on a wider field. His sales reached gigantic proportions. Ties for many hundreds of miles of tracks were furnished yearly during the days when the railroads were pushing out into the far west.

"It is too far to ship ties to Arizona from Chicago," a Santa Fe official said once to Mr. Ayer. In a few weeks Mr. Ayer was sending ties to the Santa Fe from his Arizona sawmill.

One concern with which Mr. Ayer is identified sold 6,000,000 ties last year. Another, the Texas Tie and Lumber Preserving company, treated 1,600,000 ties for southern railroad service. He owns the vessels to carry his supplies and operates on a large scale, yet for years he has not been tied down to his office. He is said by his friends to give much thought and little attention to